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The progressive element in education ...



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THE PROGRESSIVE
ELEMENT IN
EDUCATION

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The Progressive Element in Education



The word "progressive" is in the air. It is not limited to one political party, but is a qualifying adjective for at least two of the older national parties. Today an individual is either a standpatter, a progressive, or a radical whether in political, economic, or social discussions.

With the viewpoint of the standpatter we are not particularly concerned. He has severed himself from the world of today. His eyes are turned upon a setting sun of a yesterday. He does not recognize that within the period of his own existence America has broken away from the past and that from top to bottom the economic and social conditions are absolutely changed. He does not seem to realize that the life of our people has grown infinitely varied and that no operations, whether of business, industry or living, are conducted as formerly. He is a stranger to the fact that within the past three decades a new stage setting for the drama of life has been raised. He does not see that men are still struggling under old laws and public policies in a new world of industry and society.

The New Freedom

Before our eyes men are questioning whether the old must not give place to the new ; whether the barnacled Ship of State does not need scraping and overhauling. To those of us who are thoughtful, the size of its mass and the variety of its impedimenta are sometimes appalling. But to the standpatter they are as nothing. To others a stupendous program awaits us — a program for revised educational practice, for economic adjustments, for a new moral awakening.

To the radical the Ship of State is absolutely unseaworthy ; it is not only barnacled, but also decayed. The obvious remedy, in his mind, is the boring of a series of holes and letting its cargo of traditions sink beneath the turbulent waters of a discordant social order. To the radical it is a vicious waste of time to scrape, repair, and refit. To him the best truth does not lie in moderation of action or in a fair average of progress. He would listen to the words of Maeterlinck when he says, "Experience teaches us that, contrary to all that occurs in the affairs of daily life, it is alone all important to destroy — that in every social progress the great and the only difficult work is the destruction of the past." The radical is not particularly anxious about what shall be placed in the stead of the scuttled ship — he believes that somehow the very force of things will undertake the rebuilding, that there are always men enough who will attempt to plug the

holes as fast as he removes the auger from the borings. His cry is, "To the limit — to the limit — to the limit of our hopes, our thoughts and our means."

With the standpatter we have no patience. He always suggests that a little putty and copper sheeting will serve as a patch to the Ship of State; that what was good enough for the previous generations is good enough for us and ought to be for those that follow us. In the community it is his precise mission, his exclusive duty, to becalm the breezes which would send us onward. In passing, there are said to be three types of patters — standpatters; backpatters; and pitapatters.

Forward Looking Men

With the radicals we have mingled emotions. To one we give our nod of sympathy as we would to one who has a disordered mind; to another we question his sense of proportion and values; to a third we give our applause and yet see him only as a participant in a vaudeville; to a fourth we give silent admiration and hypocritically refuse our support on grounds of personal expediency; to the last we give only a blank page—the unkindest cut of all. Yet with inward sinking eyes we must see from our own experience that what was radical in a yesterday becomes commonplace in a today and moss-covered by a tomorrow.

The progressive faces the east of the sun-rising of a tomorrow. He comes not to

destroy but to construct and far be it from him to pursue intangible will-o'-the-wisps of impractical and radical dreamers. Unlike the pitapatter, he is anxious about what he shall place in the stead of things which are antiquated and unadjusted. To the iconoclast he gives credit as a thought provoker. He uses the standpatter point of view as a fixed post by which he may mark his own progress.

The standpatter anchors in the sands of traditions and customs. The radical hoists all sails, throws out all ballast, and by pushing against the mast expects to drive his boat in the face of tides and winds to the straight-away goal. The progressive has more seafaring wisdom. He understands the value of steering gears and sail reefs; he knows that no amount of pushing on his own boat-mast or of blowing against the sails from his own lungs will send the boat ahead. Knowing the law of the resolution of social forces, he sees that every external force has its possibilities in service rendering in the forward progress of a State.

Yes, the times have changed. They have always been changing. They always will be changing, and yet one sometimes wonders whether in the totality of things the law of compensation does not always hold true; whether after all, gains in certain directions are not compensated by losses in other ways; whether the law of the conservation of energy does not hold true in human affairs as it does in material things.

It All Depends

The scientific world knows that a pound of coal, black and inert mass that it is, has locked up within it, elements which will give us heat, or power, or light. If we wish to have a warmth of body we burn the fuel in our fireplace. If we wish to feel the throbs of industry, we develop horsepower through the expansive force of steam. If we prefer light for the printed page, we pass electrical energy through the tungsten filament. Excepting the perpetual motion believer, no one dares to say that the sixteen candle-power lamp has more energy than the one-tenth of the horsepower of a lathe, or the equivalent number of heat units extracted from the coal. To the mechanical engineer it is all a question of what he or his clientele desire — whether to keep warm, to manufacture, or to see into the darkened night. To the social engineer, the lump of humanity may be blackened, its possibilities locked up and inert, or it may turn the materially productive wheels of a modern industry with its workers as unsocialized and mechanical as the very wheels themselves; or this lump of humanity, by the inventive genius of the progressive, may become a source of light — a glowing mass of an enlightened humanity.

The Human Equation

Educational practice has changed. It has been changing. It will continue to

change. The educational standpatter prefers to ignore the storehouse or mine of human possibilities. To him a little educational glow and a lot of cinders and ashes of wasted childhood suffice in the educational program. By contrast, the radical in education would rush headlong, overthrowing things as he goes, breaking all laws of educational practice and pedagogical science, and attempt, so to speak, to obtain twenty incandescent lamps of learning from one horsepower of human energy. The progressive, on the other hand, knows the possibilities of the mine of human attainment, and has a conception of the particular form in which its energy shall be expressed. If there is desired only the educational heat of meeting physical needs, then he suggests that we do nothing more than light the purely physical fire of an animallike human existence.

If there is desired an educational power which makes for only industrial and material supremacy, then he says, "Add the merely technical boiler and engine and work merely for more ciphers at the left hand of the decimal point of a dollar civilization. If one desires an educational light sending out impulses of a social consciousness, then he suggests that we add to the former equipment of material things, the modern social switchboard with its complicated network of wires carrying and distributing current of human needs into every darkened pathway of human relationships.

The program for the progressive in education recognizes that changing conditions mean new methods—not necessarily new mines or new coal, but rather new tools for new conditions. The program calls for the same old source of wealth—the child. The program calls for the same purpose—the development of human wealth. It was a distilled vegetation which gave us the oil lamp. It was the same old vegetation in new form that gave us the incandescent lamp. It will be the same old sun working on a decaying vegetation or on drops of water that will underlie whatever may be the new ways in the new days of lighting the printed page. From the period of candle burning to the present one of enclosed arcs, we have had the problem of educating children, and when in the future we have light shot from invisible sources, we will still have the problem with us, and any gains which we apparently make in our educational program will be, after all, only a change in tools and in methods of working upon the same human material for the same human ends.

On Going to School

There is a vast difference between going to school and getting an education. The first is comparatively an easy process. The other can never be bought; is never marked off by grades or years; is seldom rewarded by a parchment; and never featured by mere matriculation or graduation. Abraham Lincoln's

schooling was limited, but his education was one to be envied. A pitched pine torch may have given more glow to his library of three books than a silver electrolier casting its rays over a five mile book shelf. A Pilgrim's Progress, a Paradise Lost and a Bible read and re-read may have carried him farther on the pathway of scholarship than some present, predigested learning given hypodermically by zealous teachers to unresponsive patients. A course in railsplitting may have given a physical development equal to a basket ball game before admiring sweethearts. A husking bee may have left a pleasanter taste as a bit of recreation than would a moving picture show in a stuffy, fire-trapped hall. An unbalanced diet may have been better for the physical self when induced by hard and necessary manual labor than would a balanced one prepared by a modern dietitian for a dyspeptic whose collection of imaginary ills compares favorably with a well-known advertisement for a patent breakfast drink.

You are in doubt! You see the beautiful school buildings of today as compared with the log schoolhouse of yesterday. On the one hand you see the library of a Carnegie and on the other a little pile of books religiously kept in paper covers and doled out on special occasions. You see a modern gymnasium and swimming pool as a paradise within walls as compared with the swimming hole by the overhanging willows. You observe the splendid laboratories and their

tools, utensils and chemicals are vastly superior to the home shop, the kitchens, and the farms of the early days.

Getting an Education

And then you believe that you have confounded the progressive; but remember he is not comparing buildings of concrete with those of logs. He is not thinking in terms of one hundred thousand steel trusted books as contrasted with Bibles and Lives of Washington. His mind is far away from the glitter of a test-tubed laboratory or the formalized school shop. He is not concerned with material equipment at all. He simply questions whether the modern school can do, unaided, as much for the child as did the log schoolhouse reinforced by the home, the church, and the work of the community. He is wondering whether a great quantity of reading material, lightly skimmed over, can take the place of a few books—bought by self-denial, guarded zealously, digested thoroughly. He asks you whether technical information of the laboratory unaccompanied by actual work in the field, kitchen or garden can really develop efficiency. He would remind you that a year of daily tasks assigned by the necessities of the occupational home; a year of living with a God-fearing parentage; a year of wholesome civic environment, all supplemented by a three months' schooling, could and did do more toward educating children than a five hours

a day, five days in the week, one hundred sixty days in the year sort of schooling, unaccompanied by duties of a modern home — a home more or less unoccupational, unreinforced by a clean parentage, and unsupplemented by a community life of social integrity.

A Continuous Process

The progressive insists that education is a year by year process; that it initiates its work at the first breath of a life, and ends it only at the last fluttering of the heart. He insists that it is not alone the affair of the school and the teacher; not alone the question of books, notes and examinations; not alone the material results of a tax levied for school purposes. Rather he insists that every factor in the community which makes for the increase of human wealth has a part in the educative process, from the home tasks performed by willing young hearts to the writing of the daily theme expressing within cloistered halls a human experience.

Do what we may to improve our schools, the progressive will still go so far as to say that we shall fall far short of doing what we might in educating our people. He will claim that we must have not only a new conception of educational practice but also a new definition of education itself. He believes that this conception will include a quickened sense of parental responsibility; a reborn consciousness of civic responsibilities; a new sense of

educational values ; and a new interpretation of the power of the state to provide ways and means for the increasing of human wealth.

The progressive submits the following platform and asks you to enroll as a progressive in education. In presenting the following planks of the platform, he makes no arraignment of the public school system. He leaves that to the muck-raking malcontent who delights in sickening, confusing, or entertaining the public for his own edification and notoriety.

Planks in the Platform

Plank Number One. That every child has the right to expect a clean birthright, free from a taint of disease—social, moral, or physical. That the child has a right to be wellborn, and that no school system can make thoroughbreds out of mongrels, or grow hyacinths from potatoes. He believes that the child has the right to expect that the place of his birth is free from temptations and low standards of morality. The progressive is enough of a scientific farmer to realize that environment has much to do with the quality of the breed, and he would have you believe in the laws of heredity and environment in the rearing of children, at least to the extent that you base your judgment in the selection of thoroughbred cattle. He would have you keep in mind that human beings need pure food, sanitary houses, clean

streets, and that the greed of food purveyors, ignorance of housewives, and grafting of public officials are no compensation for weakened constitutions of growing children. He would have you think of an education making for health. He asks you to consider whether the outside label of the canned vegetables always tells the inside story ; whether the typhoid fly and the garbage heap are on speaking terms ; whether the local water supply is free from contamination ; whether playgrounds are available to children, and a score of questions dealing with agencies making for a strong, clean physical being. To him a health of body is of absolute and fundamental importance in the educative process and no amount of mere fact teaching from the physiology text or a few arm and leg movements for a few hours in a schooling process, will overcome the sins of the parents, the careless habits of a home, or the low-living standards of a community.

Character a By-Product

Plank Number Two. The progressive insists upon character training for our youth. By that he does not appeal for a recitation each week from a book of ethics or an occasional perusal of "may and may not" school rules. But he again reminds you that the schooling of a child plays only a small part in character building. When a child spends only one-tenth of the time between the walls of a schoolhouse and the remainder possibly

among the closet skeletons of the home, or at the street corner, or at the show, you are deeply concerned with the character of those places which have him for nine-tenths of the time. You must remember that character is a by-product and can never come out of home closets of narrowness, meanness, or bitterness. Influences making for character are subtle, and the subtle teachings in yellow journalism, of community scandals salaciously mouthed by a gossiping parentage, of a disloyal representative of the people in legislative halls, are constant irritants to any system of schooling, be it ever so good.

But this character training must be more than merely personal in its workings; it must touch the lives of others. One's Monday must be as good as his Sunday. His socialized obligations must be paid with the regularity of his personal debts. Our responsibilities reach beyond our own desires and those of our family. No longer are we self-sufficient beings. And in our attempt to touch the lives of others, we unfortunately still act, oftentimes, as though we lived in log cabins where each place of habitation had its own moral, social, and physical law to uphold. In former times a man could contaminate his own water supply, but he never did; he could adulterate his own food, but he never went so far; he could put shoddy into his woolen goods, or build a flimsy tenement for his own kin, but we never saw these acts headlined. Today no man can contaminate,

adulterate, or cheat his own alone. We are living as responsible members of large groups. It is each for all, all for each, and no man is a law unto himself. His responsibility does not end with God alone, it begins with man.

Unselfish Ends

The progressive calls for an education in socialized character. This does not mean a new textbook or a new department in the curriculum. Rather it means a new treatment of old subject matter — the treatment which will depart from the older notion that the student himself was the chief beneficiary of culture or learning, that he was to sit on one end of the plank of learning and the professor was to be on the other end and they were to tilt up and down for the benefit of each other. Rather the progressive's conception implies that teachers and students are grouped together, interpreting human experience in the light of human needs for the purpose of rendering human service. Again, the progressive's platform states that this training can not be given by the schools alone and that the schools are not to be held entirely responsible for the development of personal and social character. As a matter of fact, it is a poor school that does not obtain more obedience to law and order; more respect to the rights of others; finer expression of social justice than are expressed by these same pupils outside of

school when supposedly under the guidance of parental and civic care. The progressive in character training, therefore, expects to see no great increase in character efficiency of youth until the community of adults recognizes that they themselves must set a standard at their own firesides, in their own market places, in their own legislative halls.

The Rights of Others

Plank Number Three. The progressive expects that the people will be educated in citizenship — not a citizenship as expressed by party lines or party dictation or political expediency; not a citizenship which goes once a year to the ballot booth for the single expression of a three hundred sixty-five day in the year duty. Rather a citizenship which can vote an increase in the school tax even if the individual has no children; can vote for macadamized roads even if he has no automobile; can vote for a new fire hose even if he resides outside the fire limits. These are not easy things to do for we are still selfish and individualistic, but remember this is not a colonial day civilization.

The Golden Rule has more force than ever. An individual's act affects his neighbor's condition. It is not a sin to expectorate in the plowed fields; it becomes a crime to do so on the village street. It is not criminal to allow sink water to drain into a distant field; it becomes a menace to public health when your neighbor has a well of

drinking water. Before the present industrial system, it was only an error in judgment to accept work at a lower wage than your neighbor, but today it is a very questionable proceeding for a worker to stand aloof from contributing by some personal sacrifice to an industrial situation involving wages, hours, and improved working conditions, when he is bound to reap later a benefit earned by loyal unionists, and unearned by his own contributory acts. It was proper for the employer to expect under the older, less complex system of industrial organization, that the worker could protect himself against accident, or save enough for a rainy day, or shift from one type of work to another. To-day it is unreasonable for an employer to ask that the worker is to be held responsible for the negligence of a fellow servant or to save enough for old age when, for instance, the active life of a mechanic in the building trades has been reduced from forty years to about twenty; or to expect that under the modern division of labor, a man thrown out of work by the discarding of a manufacturing process can find a new work, trained as he is at present to be as automatic as the very machine itself.

Democracy and Citizenship

The progressive will tell you that a new type of citizenship is demanded in this new industrial age and that educating for a personal expression of citizenship apart from that

of socialized citizenship is not meeting present needs. He will tell you that school courses in civics, lectures on Australian ballot systems, or historical surveys of political parties are far afield from present requirements of training for an expression of true, socialized citizenship. He will tell the student that the editorial page of the metropolitan journal, the *World's Work*, the program of farmers' institute, the labor union meeting, yes, even sometimes debates in the legislative halls themselves, offer more expressions of a modern conception of citizenship in a democracy than the printed pages of historical facts, maps of artillery lines of past wars or dates of reigns of kings offered in present history courses can ever produce. The progressive firmly believes that a schooling which does not teach the citizenship questions of the day is decidedly weak in its conception of the educative process — a process which should lay particular emphasis on the development of a genuine democracy.

On Avoiding Work

Plank Number Four. The progressive requests an examination of validity of the present purpose which exists in the minds of many parents for sending their children to school. Many a parent is making personal sacrifice in order that his "child may receive an education and not have to work as hard as I have worked." In other words, education appears to be some scheme for getting away from work, and while the

parent himself may hold the doctor's degree of accomplishment from the University of Living Things, he expects by some sleight of hand performance, that his own offspring through the possession of a school certificate, is to step into the world and obtain immediate entry into the clan of achievers. But the countersign for admission is intricate and some have never learned it. To master the countersign depends upon the attitude of the student and parent toward the educative process, upon the methods employed in the school, and upon influences at work outside the school. If mother takes away from her pampered daughter certain home responsibilities; if father says, "John is a student now and, of course, cannot be expected to help me"; if the school directly or even subtly gives the impression that it occupies a position of superiority over such common things as business, industry, home or farm; if the student believes the school to be a place where he may disport himself before being condemned to a life of hard labor when he leaves its doors—then the progressive states most emphatically that such points of view are not contributory to the educative process, and the doorkeeper in the House of Achievers hears no knock.

What and How

In these June days there is much illusion. The college graduate expresses relief as he takes his sheepskin; the child of fourteen

smiles with satisfaction as he holds in his hand an employment certificate entitling him to work. Both say, "Thank fortune, my education is finished. Now for the realities of life." But tomorrow the illusion passes, for the world asks, "What can he do, and how well can he do it?"

It does not ask him what he can remember about what others have done. It does not seek his average percentages. It does not presume even to question the subject matter which he has studied. All it asks is, "What has he to offer as his contribution to the work-a-day world?" He offers culture, but this does not necessarily result from a studying of cultural subjects. He offers capacity, but this does not necessarily follow from mastering printed pages or recording the achievements of others. He offers character, but this does not always spring from the exercise of negative virtues. He says he can work, but classroom achievement forced out only by the whip and lash of marks and credits imposed by earnest teachers, does not always prove that he can work.

Ability to Arrive

No, the qualifications for success are too subtle to be expressed in any school course of study. Personality, character, capacity, and ability to arrive are not milestoned in the curriculum alone. One may "pass his subject" but one can never pass his attitude toward living by any school examination

system yet devised, for out of all his school work, out of all the outlook upon life imbued from the home and community, out of all the activities involved in book studies, in recreations, in avocations, in vocations, the student reaches a resulting philosophy of life. It is this philosophy which is tested all through the civil service of life in which there are long, continuous, competitive examinations.

The progressive will tell you that education instead of being a scheme to avoid work or to make work easy, is rather a plan for preparing people to perform service and the only way to obtain effective training for service is to perform it while in training. The complete alliance of reciting the deeds of others in school buildings with a nonoccupational existence outside of school walls; the dodging of school responsibilities on a sixty per cent passing mark basis when life demands one hundred per cent efficiency; the personal illusion that because one is studying, he necessarily must be receiving training—all these must pass away before the progressive in education will believe that parents are justified in feeling that their children are receiving an education simply by going to school.

School Only an Adjunct

Plank Number Five. The progressive believes that the schools should be open for eleven months during the year, and that the educative process should be carried on for

twelve months. He sees no valid objection to having the child receive less schooling than this, provided the training in school is supplemented by training in the home, on the farm, at the shop, or in the store. He realizes that no general statement of a time limit for the working out of a schooling process will suffice in a civilization as complicated as ours. His present criticism is that educational practice now concerns itself entirely with a school affair, and that more and more the public is led into believing that the schoolhouse is a place in which to get an education and that holidays, vacations, and hours outside of school are periods of recuperation to be held sacred for resting up for the schooling process. A greater educational fallacy never came out of the mind of man.

The progressive has no compunction in saying that we are on the wrong track in advocating the present system of an all-day schooling for a uniform number of days for all children with emphasis laid upon the work which goes on in school and accompanying divorcement from the work which goes on outside of those hours, or that which goes on after the child has gone to work. He states that it is quite possible to establish a relationship, before the child has gone to work, between the home and the school and another relationship between the shop, store, or farm and the school after the child has gone to work. He very deliberately affirms

that the schooling process must be, necessarily an adjunct to the activities outside the doors of the school and it is absurd to force activities upon the school which by itself it can never successfully carry on. Furthermore, the progressive states with full knowledge of its significance, that it is absurd, unreasonable, and fatal to democracy to force industrial activities, narrowing in their outlook, upon working people after they have left school without providing the opportunity of supplementing daily vocational experience by further educational and social advantages.

Naturally the preceding claims divide themselves into two phases: first, that many things which are now being introduced into the school can never succeed under the artificial conditions necessarily imposed by school conditions unless a portion of the work is carried on in cooperation with the home; second, that there is no sharp division between leaving school and going to work — that the educative process may continue to exist after the formal teaching is over. The latter claim involves two subdivisions: first, a system of continuation or part-time day schools for youthful workers in various factories, stores, and on farms where they may earn and yet learn — earn by the daily task and, through attendance upon day schools for a few hours a week, learn those things which supplement their daily experience or which broaden their outlook upon life; and, second, the extension of the use of school

plants to include social, political, recreative, and educational features for the clientele outside of that now reached by the present conception of the utility of a public building dedicated to the education of the people.

The Occupational Home

The progressive would ask you to consider the first proposition — that of home project work done in cooperation with the schools. He has already pointed out that training for health, for character, and for citizenship are primarily home projects, and that the school is only an adjunct to this training. Similarly the introduction of vocational subjects, such as manual training, cooking, sewing, and agriculture calls for a very close cooperation with the home and the community. We are apt to believe that we have made an educational advance when we lay out a vocational course of study, purchase equipment and secure teachers. Mother no longer shows Susan how to bake bread or to cut out a shirt waist. Father no longer gives John any work to do in repairing the fence or putting up a shelf, for, of course, the school will teach these things. Undoubtedly the school can teach the girl about the chemistry of food, food composition, sanitation, and some facts of personal hygiene with greater skill and from a broader scientific background than the mother. Undoubtedly the school can teach a boy to read a drawing and to make a dove-tailed joint better than can a father.

Unquestionably the teacher of agriculture can give better lessons on soil, balanced rations, and fertilizers than can the average farmer ; but these subjects are not in the school curriculum merely to teach girls to cook or boys to make joints, or to know that lime will benefit a sour soil. These things are very well in their way, but the largest benefit results when the girls have a right attitude toward homemaking, the boys the right attitude toward the business of farming or the following of a trade. These subjects are avowedly to train young people to feel, to think, and to work, and are not to give them mere information or a little handskill, or to permit them to indulge in a few neurotic shivers about the dignity of labor. A right attitude toward occupations never yet resulted from classroom study alone. No girl, for example, can be trained toward the business of homemaking by a school laboratory course alone.

Schools Should Educate

"Let the children," the progressive says, "have a home which furnishes some occupational work and then let the school supplement this home work by special study under trained teachers. For example, the school can show a girl how to design a dress appropriate in color scheme and in material, and meeting the individual requirements of facial expression and physical form and the material pocketbook ; but the girl should finish

the dress at home. It is hardly right that the time of high school girls be practically wasted in school hours in the process of sewing on buttons, making button holes, and stitching ruffles when they are deserving of a schooling befitting their age and their training possibilities."

The progressive believes that the high school should teach scientific agriculture, vocational handwork, household arts, but he does not believe in wasting the time of young people of secondary age in plain sewing, mere mixing of ingredients, making taborets, and digging in the school garden unless these subjects have a scientific treatment in the school and are supplemented by home practice. A school teacher might discuss the menu for a family of four, and develop a lesson plan. The girl, before she is given school credit for this exercise, should report on her homework when she has carried out the lesson. A boy might well study the methods of tree-grafting, but if the lesson ends there, its value is largely lost.

Realities Made Unreal

Furthermore, the best results of vocational work can come only when there is a strong incentive born out of necessity and related to actual home experience. This work from its very nature, offers more opportunities for live relationships than the older, disciplinary studies. It is difficult in the teaching of Latin to transplant one's self to Rome. When one is

studying French and asking for bread, the teaching would be more effective if the student were hungry in a strange land. But such conditions are not possible in teaching these subjects. Vocational work, on the other hand, can have vitality and we are in danger of making it bookish, schoolish, pedantic. Instead of the incentive of a real meal to prepare in a real home, we imagine by the directions of the book that there is supposed to be a family of four. Instead of having the incentive of a real orchard which needs trimming and pruning, we take a book, a blackboard, an imaginary saw, and remove pictorial limbs from a pictorial tree. We delude ourselves into thinking we are advancing in educational methods if we develop a school laboratory and set up a few tools and apparatus. It is easy to provide apparatus and books. It is not easy to provide realities. These can be found only in real homes, real orchards, and amid normal incentives of real life. The only way to make school work real is to tie it up with useful work.

The progressive casts no reflections upon the scientific teaching of vocational subjects. He does claim, however, and most emphatically, that the purpose of such work is to bring about a resulting philosophy of life, an attitude toward work, a concreteness and definiteness of action leading toward service, a training of an alert mind, in short, a purpose in education and not merely a bit of school practice.

Earning and Learning

In considering the second proposition, that of continuing one's education while at work, the progressive reiterates the statement that the educative process is continuous and that there is no exact demarcation between leaving school and going to work. He would have you consider the importance of every sort of an agency which would educate those who are no longer in attendance at day schools.

The first division already referred to concerns the part-time or continuation school movement for youthful workers in commerce and industry. When the child of fourteen leaves school with his working papers, the present school has lost him. He enters the factory or store in which the State requires so many cubic feet of fresh air each hour, demands safety devices for dangerous machinery, and regulates the hours of labor. The progressive says to the State, "You must go further. The child is still in his teens. He needs to grow mentally and spiritually. Your automatic machines and commercial methods are narrowing and confining. You want his services; he needs your money. I recognize these mutual relations. Still more, however, does the State need him as a useful and efficient citizen. For this reason I require you to pass laws which will release him from his work for a few hours a week and allow him to attend a part-time school in order that his daily grind may be supplemented by further

training in the technique of his work and in citizenship studies."

The progressive will tell you that the law of the conservation of human energy holds true; that society can not get the cheap-priced products of child labor for nothing; that it must pay the price with anæmic, halfgrown, intellectually dull children unless it develops a system of continuation schools to offset the modern methods of factory production.

A Door Always Open

The second division, that of the extended use of school plants for older people and for broader purposes than now generally conceded, is far-reaching in its possibilities. The progressive is convinced that the schoolhouse can be made to conserve, unify, and uphold the community by using it as a meeting place for both the civic and social life of the neighborhood. The social center movement by its method of bringing together all the people for calm, reasonable and tolerant discussion is more likely than anything else to make possible the settlement of large industrial and social questions by peaceful means rather than by upheaval and violence.

In America we have the choice of using bombs or of using brains, of setting off dynamite or of setting off debate. Our civic, social, educational, recreational center should be the organ through which a better

informed, more intelligent, more socially conscious electorate will be better able to voice its desires.

Intellectually such a center could serve the people by housing traveling exhibits of pictures and works of art, and traveling libraries and correspondence courses in the arts and crafts touching the vocational life of the people. Such a center will bring to the farmer new applications of science; to the automatic machine worker, through evening technical schools, it will bring a renewed intellectual vigor; to the man at the treadmill of industry or the girl behind the counter it should give intellectual stimulus to a plodding brain; to the farmer's wife in the hour of her mental inertia may come the reading course in sanitation or home decoration.

On Being Amused

In ways of recreation, the civic center could touch the lives of the people. The progressive pictures a municipal or village concert awakening the dormant spirit harnessed to a grasping commercialism. He sees a victrola; a talking and moving picture machine installed in the community school with an audience of adults and children feeling the impulse which comes from the presentation of wholesome, entertaining, and thought-provoking material recorded on mechanical disks and rolls. The progressive asks, "How much longer are we to leave to private enterprise the entertainment of our

people? Are we always to pay theatrical trusts for being amused with dish-water comedies or barnyard dramas? Are we always to have attendance upon operas and high type of music confined to those who can pay for a stall or box while most of the people are huddled in box-stalls listening to a hurdy-gurdied, rag-timed travesty on music? Have the people of the open country absolutely lost all power of amusing themselves, and must they discard the homely but truly representative entertainments drawn from their daily activities and substitute a manufactured article imported from a metropolis and devised by a partnership of the Devil and the dollar? Have the foreigners of the city lost their native dances, folk songs, and simple, natural amusements? Are they about to Edisonize their recreative faculties and theatre-trust an idealism which once produced a Garibaldi, a Kossuth, and a Michaelangelo? These are questions which the progressive raises and on the answer rests our hope of an avocational and recreational life—a life increasing in length because of more material wealth and a corresponding shortening of hours given over to labor.

An Educational Fallacy

Plank Number Six. The progressive is very much concerned over the changes in educational practice which are being advocated in city school systems; changes, to his mind, which are contrary to democratic

essentials. He refers particularly to the proposed plan for introducing vocational training and the reason given for its necessity and the methods by which it is to be attained. He realizes that this country has too long neglected the question of training people for the various callings connected with the industries, the crafts, and the home. He appreciates the zeal with which the advocates of vocational training have entered upon their work. He sees cause for their insistence that something be done. He even is willing that they hammer away at the weaknesses of the present educational system with the hope of stirring people to action. But in this hammering process some of the radicals act as though two-thirds of their blows would be lost amid the inertia of the mass. They seem to have no fear lest they go too fast and when they appear to be rushing at a head-long and dangerous pace, they will tell us that it is only to counterbalance unjustifiable delays and to make up for time lost during years of inactivity.

The Socalled Normal Child

Notwithstanding this the progressive contends that vocational training is being established, especially in our large centers of population, on a wrong basis. We are told that it is to be given to pupils who do not do well with their other studies, on the assumption that such children are hand-minded while those who successfully master

the present book schooling are obviously book-minded. But the progressive will tell you that all normal children are concrete-minded, and that the child who can make his grades year by year without stumbling; who can successfully cover a course of study unrelated to his experience, and apart from his environment; who can be trained by memorizing the other fellow's doings, is after all a most unusual and even abnormal child. It is a natural heritage of the race to make things, to grow things, to live with living things. Contact with nature should be expressed in the educative process of all children. The progressive believes that the child who can go to school, study from books alone, shut his eyes to all but the printed page, and his ears to all but the voice of a teacher, is as abnormal a creature as any of the freaks which we pay admission to see, and the worst of it is, the better he does these things, the more truly unusual and abnormal he is.

The progressive decidedly objects to that educational practice which would limit hand training, nature study, household arts and all activity work to the so-called "intellectually lame" — those deaf to mere information teaching; those blind to the printed page.

He particularly rebels at the present practice of forcing monastical education upon the adolescent youth — a period of deepseated desire to do things; to be a part of the work-a-day world. In fact, he could present to you a platform of progressivism in adolescent

education which would equal in material the combined planks of his present platform. He knows and you know — yes, even the children themselves know—that it is quite impossible to get into the brain except through the avenues of the five senses. If you do not believe that a boy expresses pedagogical nature in the schoolroom and his own child nature outside, just watch him on a ball field, active, vivacious, inquisitive, seeking information, assuming responsibility, exercising team play — and then see him at school, a weary shrinking sort of creature, repeating with his lips some one else's thoughts in some one else's words.

The Educational Sandwich

And again the progressive objects. This time to the introduction of vocational training for the sake of holding children in school. The prevailing opinion is that we should add a little vocational training and let the present subject matter and method of treatment stand. He objects just as he would if he complained about the quality of the bread and the overaged condition of the meat in a sandwich and was told by the restaurateur to add a goodly amount of mustard and then he would not mind the age of the meat because it would be offset by the sharpness of the mustard. "If elementary education of city children" the progressive says, "is apart from race heritage, child nature, and needs, then the only procedure is to improve

it—not by adding vocational training as an inducement to eat the educational sandwich—but by improving the quality of the ingredients and changing the proportions in which they are served.” Vocational training has a purpose, but it is not simply to perform the function primarily the duty of general education.

The chief point with which the progressive takes issue in the methods of those who would introduce vocational training, is that of giving definite trade training in an all-day school where these well-intentioned people develop their courses for this training from the supposed needs of the employers. As the progressive sees it, these needs are very narrow, often selfish, lack permanency, and are primarily due to an unwillingness or an incapacity on the part of the employer to meet them himself. The employer in the clothing trades states that he wants machine operators; the machinery makers ask for drill tenders; the shoe manufacturers desire lasters; the textile owners say they want doffers. The school which has for years closed its eyes and ears to the demands of life and has prided itself on its exclusiveness, now rushes in “where angels fear to tread” and says, “By all means we will do it. We will supply you with skilled workers who can work on your automatic machines. We will go over to Germany and see what is being done there and we will give you everything that you want.” Truly the American spirit with a

vengeance! Like Maeterlinck, the radical in vocational education says, "Let us not fear lest we be drawn too far and let no reflection however just, break or temper our ardor. Our future excesses are essential to the equilibrium of life."

Permanent Needs of Industry

But the progressive would ask him to reflect and temper his ardor. He would ask that the day vocational school train its youth toward the way into the permanent requirements of industry. These requirements are good health that the worker may withstand the nervous strain of modern production; a personal and socialized character to assist in the solution of tremendous economic problems which are coming up in the labor world; certain elements of citizenship training in order that we may have industrial justice in our democracy; a mental capacity that the worker may think as well as operate; and finally, fundamental skill, exchangeable in various branches of a trade or between various trades themselves. The progressive would leave it to the industries themselves to train their youthful workers for definite industrial processes in the exacting and minute processes of the various differentiated lines of activity by a factory and office apprenticeship system maintained at their own expense. Or he would suggest that they have their employed youth return to a day school for a few hours a week for part-time work in specialized

branches of the craft at the expense of the employer. The progressive is so earnest in this matter that he would ask leave to offer these propositions as a separate and last plank in his platform.

On an American Basis

Plank Number Seven. The material constituting this plank sums up in a measure all that the progressive has said relative to educational ideals and practice. He believes in two great divisions of the educative process; one he would call the "Way in" education—an education practically common to all pupils; one dealing in the elements of citizenship, studies of language, history, geography; a training in the rudiments of arithmetic and elementary science; an appreciation of nature, music and the decorative arts; a training of hand-skill with its correlative development of mentality. This education to be given to pupils before they leave school at the age of sixteen, by the combined efforts of the home, the environment, and the schoolhouse.

The other phase of education he would call the "Way out" education. It is specifically adapted to individual needs—vocational in a narrow sense, social in their broadest interpretation—given informally as well as formally through every social, educational, and civic agency whose good works in any way can contribute to that educative process which will make people after they have gone

to work, more contented, more efficient, more open-minded, and better citizens of an industrial democracy.

Such a program is truly American. It is not copied from the class versus caste educational system of a Germany; nor the culture versus chattel civilization of a Greece; nor the gentleman versus peasant system of a France; nor the Oxford versus London slum plan of an England. It is based upon a democracy of equality of educational opportunity. Its plan is developed on the basis that every child is a ward of the State up to at least sixteen years of age; that the State has the right to see that his health is conserved, to guard when necessary his morals, to watch over his parents and compel them to let him go to school, to protect him from harmful child labor. The State is to do everything in its power to make the child able to meet the physical and mental emergencies of life adequately; make him acquainted with Mother Earth and her generous bounty by actual work on the soil; make him happy in the joy of cheerful labor; assist him in learning to use the eye and hand in useful yet beautiful craft work; bring him to the point of enjoying that character building which comes only with actual participation in the processes of feeling, seeing, thinking, doing; help him discover his aptitudes and interests and send him on the road to a vocation with some knowledge of its direction and some proficiency in walking thereon. These are

some of the steps in the educative process which the progressive expects to see develop before the child leaves school. They are steps which mark the "way in."

No Blind Alleys

Let us assume that the child has now left school. He is now on the road. It is long, confusing, with many turns and pitfalls. It is filled with automatic machines, business systems, new inventions displacing the labor of his hands. It has monotony, competition, unrest. It has the burden of long hours, low wages, and industrial diseases. It is milestoned with confusing signals, signs, and beckonings.

The State again seeks its opportunity to meet its obligations. It has a new point of view. It no longer raises the heavy hand of command over large groups of children, parents or employers. Its attitude is that of offering opportunities for the individual to find his "way out." The State has its part-time school where the youth may learn the technique of a new process; where the farmer may have the best interpretation of the last word in scientific farming; where the housewife may learn of a labor-saving device. It has its evening schools for further instructions in the technique of the craft or for the intellectual up-lift of the saleswoman, the machine tender, the day laborer. It has its correspondence courses where the coal shoveler may study between the firings of the boiler, where the

lonely signal operator may receive his first lessons in the mysterious force which his levers direct. It has its summer courses for the teacher who needs a new vision, and winter courses for the farmer's boy who has the leisure which awaits the coming of the spring. It has its municipal theatre; its civic center; its people's gymnasium; its playgrounds and parks to amuse a worn out mind, build up a tired out body, and reclaim a lost soul.

The Social Switchboard

The progressive sees the educative process as a huge, complicated switchboard—distributing, it may be, the heat of physical needs; or the power of a national material supremacy; or the light of the higher impulses of a people—he sees the main feed wire leading to it, carrying the burdens of humanity—a bulky, low-voltage current of mysterious life forces. He sees switches, connections, lead wires of agencies social, industrial, educational. Emanating from the switchboard he sees wires leading into the pathways of men, carrying currents of human desires and needs into every darkened pathway of human relationships. And over it all he sees the community—the civic conscience of a people manipulating these switches, readjusting connections, plugging in a new agency in order that the income current of a common humanity may be rehabilitated, redistributed redirected, into a world of service adapted in amperage and voltage of personal power and

accomplishment to do the task assigned — a task of service-rendering with knowledge, power and joy.

Yes, the switchboard distributing these human agencies is complicated. It is a network of wires confusing in such a civilization as ours. In the hands of the standpatter, the switchboard is a blurred mass and all its paraphernalia appears to him so useless, so unlike the days of candles, so utterly confusing in its intent, that in his ignorance and narrow-mindedness he turns away in disgust.

To the radical the switchboard is equally complicated but instead of studying out its connections and making necessary adjustments, he would, with a big movement of his hand, maybe with bombs and dynamite, tear off the switches, short circuit the connections, and pull out the plugs. He glories in the smash! dances fanatically before the flashes of light! and goes down into the darkness of the chaos.

The progressive stands on an insulated mat; follows the blue-printed diagram in the pulling out of the plugs, connecting the wires, and labeling the connections — all for a purpose. You ask, "What is this purpose?" *It is the increase of human wealth.*

